(b) whether low cost products could promote telemedicine in developing countries in a big way and telemedicine and e-health had an important role in providing quality healthcare to the people of world; and

(c) if so, what decisions were taken at the 12th International Conference of International Society of Telemedicine and e-health (IST&H) and the indicating outcome thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) Yes,Sir. During a press conference held at Chennai at the Appollo Hospital through video-conference on the occasion of announcement of joint conference of International Society and Telemedicine Society of India held in November, 1-3- 2007 at Chennai, the President of International Society for Telemedicine and e-health, gave a statement as above.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) The said conference is not yet held. 12th Annual Conference of International Society for Telemedicine and e-health is going to be held jointly with 3rd Annual Conference of Telemedicine Society of India on Nov.1-3-2007

Declining sex ratio

4068. MS. MABEL REBELLO: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) the State which has the highest decline in sex ratio during the last decade;

(b) what are the steps Government propose to change this ugly mindset of the people;

(c) what are the consequences of this declining sex ratio; and

(d) whether it would result in more girls being married in younger age, more girls dropping out of education, increased maternal mortality and an increase in acts of violence against girls and women such as rape, abduction, trafficking and forced polyandry?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI PANABAKA LAKSHMI): (a) The highest

decline in the sex ratio is in the UT of Daman and Diu from 969 in 1991 to 710 in 2001 as reported by the Census. The highest decline in case of the State is from 934 in 1991 to 922 in 2001 in the State of Maharashtra.

(b) It is, nevertheless, recognized that mere legislation is not enough to deal with this problem that has roots in social behavior and prejudices. Various activities have been undertaken to create awareness against the practice of pre-natal determination of sex and female foeticide through Radio, Television, and print media units. Workshops and seminars are also organized through Voluntary Organizations at State/regional/district/ block levels to create awareness against this social evil. Cooperation has also been sought from religious/spiritual leaders, as well as medical fraternity to curb this practice. The Government of India has also launched 'Save the Girl Child Campaign' with a view to lessen son preference by highlighting achievements of young girls.

(c) and (d) The main consequences of declining child sex ratio would be polyandry, trafficking, rape, human trade. Examples have been observed in the vulnerably States, such as Haryana, Punjab wherein women are bought in from the economically backward States of the country, such as Orissa, Bihar, etc. by making payment. In the State of Haryana, polyandry has been seen to be practiced due to lack of women in the area. Such incidents may accelerate the cases of violence against women in the society.

World Bank aided malaria control programme in Madhya Pradesh

†4069. MISS ANUSUIYA UIKEY: Will the Minister of HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE be pleased to state:

(a) whether malaria control programme is being carried out in Madhya Pradesh with the help of World Bank;

(b) if so, whether it is being discontinued *w.e.f.* March, 2007;

(c) whether the situation of malaria in the tribal areas of the said State has become normal and if not, whether this scheme would be continued in its second phase; and

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†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.